

Article - Natural Resources

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§1-104.

(a) The Secretary is responsible for the development of coordinated policies for the preservation, conservation, enhancement, wise use, and perpetuation of the natural resources of the State. He is responsible for the efficient coordination of all the natural resources activities of the State including the settlement of conflicts that may arise among units within the Department of Natural Resources. In the discharge of his responsibility the Secretary shall:

(1) Provide a forum of communication among natural resources units and a source of information for the Governor and General Assembly as to the preservation, conservation, development, and use of all the State's natural resources;

(2) Study and evaluate any plan, program, or activity or any combination of plans, programs, or activities within one or more of the units of the Department, and recommend any legislative, budgetary, or administrative changes to provide more effective administration, clarify responsibilities, terminate obsolete programs, establish desirable programs, or alter or amend programs to meet changed or changing conditions;

(3) Review federal statutes, policies, programs, and activities which affect or may affect natural resources in the State and recommend to federal, State, and local agencies and institutions procedures for the coordination of these programs;

(4) Study the natural resources activities of the subdivisions of the State and recommend procedures for coordination of the natural resources activities of the State and its subdivisions;

(5) Maintain a catalog classified by use, of public land acquired or used in the preservation, conservation, development, management, or enjoyment of the natural resources; review and approve all plans and proposals of the units of the Department for the acquisition of additional land for such purposes, taking into account public land owned and managed for identical or similar purposes by federal agencies and by counties, municipalities, and other political subdivisions of the State;

(6) Establish and maintain, for the use of the Department, a natural resources library, cataloged according to a recognized library system and containing legal, scientific, and administrative reports, books, documents, photographs, records, and other information on the natural resources and natural resources administration; and

(7) Provide technical assistance to other State units, counties, municipalities, corporations, organizations, groups, and individuals in planning, organizing, and conducting leisure activities and recreation programs.

(b) The Secretary shall represent the Department at hearings or meetings of the Congress of the United States and the General Assembly of Maryland, State and interstate conferences, and at local meetings or hearings pertaining to any matter of concern to the Department.

(c) The Secretary may transfer, assign or reassign any function or activity of any unit within the Department, together with the staff, funds and equipment associated with that function or activity, either to the office of the Secretary or to any other unit within the Secretary's jurisdiction, in order to increase efficiency and economy in administering natural resources in the State. Whenever the Secretary believes any transfer of function or activity renders misleading or inadequate the name of any unit within the Department as enumerated in § 1-102 of this subtitle, he, with the Governor's approval, may assign a new name or names to the affected unit. If this is done, the Secretary shall cause to be submitted to the next ensuing session of the General Assembly a legislative proposal for appropriate amendment of § 1-102 of this subtitle.

(d) The Secretary shall publish books, pamphlets, maps, and other materials on the subject of natural resources and encourage and assist the Department's units in the preparation of these materials for publication. He shall maintain a supply of the publications and other materials for sale at cost to schools, libraries, and the general public, and establish policies for the Department on the gratuitous distribution of publications issued by the Department and its member units.

(e) The Secretary shall publish for calendar year 2015 and each subsequent calendar year a report which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) A review of studies, deliberations, conclusions, and recommendations of the Department;

(2) The annual reports submitted by the separate units within the Department which shall be edited by the Secretary's staff; and

(3) A review of other natural resources activities of interest or concern to the State and its citizens.

(f) Every unit in the Department shall report to the Secretary as provided in the rules and regulations promulgated by the Secretary.

(g) The Secretary is responsible for promulgating rules and regulations for the Department. He shall review and have the power to approve, disapprove, issue, or revise the rules and regulations of every unit of the Department.

(h) (1) The authority, powers, duties, and functions granted to the Secretary or the Department shall be exercised and performed by the Secretary or by any unit or official within the Department designated by the Secretary.

(2) (i) The Secretary may delegate to a person the authority to issue licenses pertaining to fishing or hunting.

(ii) The Secretary may not delegate the authority to issue a fishing or hunting license to a clerk of a circuit court.

(i) The office of Secretary of Natural Resources shall have a seal for purposes of authentication of copies of records or papers in his office.

(j) The Secretary may exercise or perform any power, duty, responsibility, or function which any of the following units, or their successors, may exercise or perform: the Maryland Geological Survey, the Wildlife Administration, the Natural Resources Police Force, the Forest and Park Service, the Water Resource Administration, the Energy Administration, and the Tidewater Administration.

(k) At least 45 days before the Department seeks approval by the Board of Public Works of the purchase of any interest in land for which the State contribution to the purchase exceeds \$2,000,000, the Secretary shall provide the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee with:

(1) A description of the proposed purchase;

(2) A description of the interest the Department will hold in the property; and

(3) A listing of the proposed sources of money to be used for the purchase.

(l) For fiscal year 2007, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill submitted to the General Assembly an appropriation in an amount equal to at least \$88,000 for the Department to maintain a natural resources library as required under subsection (a)(6) of this section.

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